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Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6605th meeting

Tuesday, 30 August 2011, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri	(India)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Ms. Marinčić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Tian Lin
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Onowu
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 5 August 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2011/488)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East

Letter dated 5 August 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2011/488)

The President: Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Israel, Italy and Spain to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/545, containing the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United States of America.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/488, containing a letter dated 5 August 2011 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

A vote was taken by a show of hands.

In favour:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2004 (2011).

I now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): I would like to take this opportunity to express our deep appreciation for the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), and its leadership and members, women and men, for their dedication and services. Lebanon commends the efforts and sacrifices of the UNIFIL forces operating in southern Lebanon and expresses its appreciation to all troop-contributing countries, many of which are represented around this table, including the presidency. It attaches great importance to strengthening coordination and cooperation with UNIFIL in accordance with the agreed rules of engagement in order to ensure the proper implementation of the mission entrusted to it. Lebanon would also like to reiterate its commitment to the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) in its entirety.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Waxman (Israel): Allow me, Mr. President, to commend you for your able stewardship of the Security Council this month.

I would like to begin by offering Israel's condolences to all those affected by the appalling attacks on United Nations Headquarters in Abuja, Nigeria, last week.

Israel welcomes the adoption of resolution 2004 (2011) and the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). UNIFIL plays a vital role in promoting stability in our region. I would like to convey Israel's appreciation to the UNIFIL troops, their commanders, the troop-contributing countries and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Israel is committed to cooperating with the United Nations to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006).

Yet, as we convene here today, serious threats to peace and security in Lebanon stand in the way of the full implementation of that resolution. I would like to highlight four of those challenges this afternoon.

First, Hizbullah continues to rapidly build up its arsenal of advanced weaponry and expand its military presence throughout Lebanon, including south of the Litani River. Tens of thousands of sophisticated missiles and rockets are now in the hands of that terrorist organization. Its growing arsenal places the majority of Israeli civilians under the spectre of attack.

Hizbullah seeks to acquire even more advanced weapons through joint and coordinated transfers of illegal arms supplied by Iran and directly facilitated by Syria across the Syrian-Lebanese border. The United Nations and others in the international community are aware of the scope and magnitude of those transfers. Yet the existing arms embargo has not been enforced

and there has been a lack of progress in the disarmament and disbandment of Hizbullah and other militias, as mandated by Security Council resolutions. Israel views this stagnation with great concern.

Israel's second issue of concern relates to the cynical Hizbullah tactics that use Lebanese civilians to further their terrorist activity targeting Israeli civilians. Since the deployment of UNIFIL forces in 2006, Hezbollah's modus operandi has shifted towards intentionally embedding its military infrastructure within civilian villages and residential areas. These developments are occurring in UNIFIL's area of operations and throughout other densely populated areas of Lebanon. Hizbullah terrorist bases, firing positions and missile storage centres are located adjacent to — and sometimes within — schools, hospitals, homes and mosques.

Such exploitation of civilians as human shields stands in grave violation of international law. On numerous occasions, Israel has provided the international community with detailed information about these violations, yet they continue. More concerted efforts must be made to fully implement paragraph 8 of resolution 2004 (2011), just adopted, which calls on all States to

> "fully support and respect the establishment between the Blue Line and the Litani River of an area free of any armed personnel, assets and weapons other than those of the Government of Lebanon and UNIFIL".

The Lebanese authorities bear particular responsibility for putting an end to these serial violations of resolution 1701 (2006).

Thirdly, Israel remains concerned by the violence directed at UNIFIL and Hizbullah's continued attempts to obstruct the movement and work of the force. From the periodic reports on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), it is clear that Hizbullah has long used so-called civilians to impede UNIFIL's ability to operate. It employs a range of tactics, including throwing stones, threatening the Force with weapons and confiscating equipment. The recent terrorist attacks against UNIFIL on 27 May and 26 July marked a serious escalation of the violence directed at the Force and should be taken very seriously.

The United Nations and the international community cannot stand by as Hizbullah continues to obstruct UNIFIL's work. While Hizbullah's fingerprints are all over these clear obstructions, its name is hardly ever mentioned in United Nations reports. The international community must also ensure that the Force has the tools and soldiers necessary to carry out its mandate effectively.

Finally, despite its obligations under resolution 1701 (2006), the Government of Lebanon continues to take provocative actions along the Blue Line. On 1 August, a soldier from the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) fired on Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) situated south of the Blue Line. This was not an isolated incident, and it was only by chance that the event did not result in casualties. Let me remind the Council that on 3 August 2010, in a similar incident, the LAF shot and killed reservist IDF Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel Dov Harari.

We expect the Government of Lebanon to prevent such incidents from occurring in the future. The international community must also take action to prevent further provocations and convey a clear message to Lebanon that such attacks carry serious potential for escalation. In that respect, Israel welcomes the renewed calls in today's resolution on all parties to respect the Blue Line in its entirety, and will continue to work with UNIFIL to visibly mark the Blue Line in its entirety. These efforts are integral to ensuring regional stability, and we call on Lebanon to uphold its clear international obligations in this regard.

The presence of UNIFIL in southern Lebanon serves an indispensable role in advancing stability in our area. In conclusion, I wish to reiterate our support for today's resolution, to extend our deep appreciation to all troop-contributing countries, and to emphasize our sincere gratitude to the men and women of UNIFIL, who are performing a difficult task in a difficult environment to promote peace and security for all in our region.

The President: The representative of Lebanon has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I give him the floor.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): Five years after the adoption of resolution 1701 (2006), the Lebanese Government, as I just said, remains committed to the full implementation of said resolution in its entirety and calls upon the United Nations to put an end to Israeli violations and threats to Lebanon's sovereignty in order to allow the implementation of the resolution

and to move from the precarious situation of a cessation of hostilities to a permanent ceasefire. This commitment was reiterated by the Prime Minister of Lebanon during his visit to southern Lebanon on 16 July.

We believe that the objective and terms of resolution 1701 (2006) are constantly undermined by Israel's every violation of our airspace, every encroachment of our national waters, and every obstacle to marking the Blue Line. Time and again, Israel has exploited allegations of arms smuggling to systematically violate Lebanon's sovereignty. Time and again, we have called for evidence to be presented to the Lebanese authorities and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), through the tripartite mechanism, for verification and immediate action. Once again, the Secretary-General's reiterates in his most recent report on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) the well-known fact that "[t]o date, UNIFIL has neither been provided with, nor found, evidence of the unauthorized transfer of arms into its area of operations" (*S/2011/406, para. 27*).

Need I remind the Council of the disproportionate use of force by the Israeli army against civilians in southern Lebanon? Let me just refer to the demonstrations that took place on 15 May. It is indisputable that every single victim of Israeli bullets was an unarmed civilian. These unarmed civilians might have tossed stones across the Blue Line, yet they were met with bullets, rendering the lethal Israeli response grossly disproportionate. Some may well have reached the technical fence, but it is unquestionable that those unarmed civilians who were shot were all shot on Lebanese territory, which makes the Israeli response indefensible once again. Suffice it here to quote yet again from the Secretary-General's report:

> "The firing of live ammunition by the Israel Defense Forces across the Blue Line against the demonstrators, which resulted in the loss of civilian life and a significant number of casualties, constituted a violation of resolution 1701 (2006) and was not commensurate with the threat to Israeli soldiers." (*ibid., para. 9*)

Let me also remind the Council that 10 months ago Mr. Michael Williams informed us about the decision of the Israeli Cabinet to, in principle, withdraw from Al-Ghajar. We then said that seeing is believing. Here we are again 10 months later, and all we see is what the Secretary-General himself saw and clearly states in his report, to the effect that Israel "continued its occupation of the northern part of Ghajar village and an adjacent area of land north of the Blue Line, in violation of resolution 1701 (2006)" (*ibid., para. 12*). Not only the chapter of Al-Ghajar, but also the chapters of the Shab'a farms and the Kfar Shuba Hills, should be closed once and for all. We encourage the Secretary-General to intensify his diplomatic efforts to ensure that Israel withdraws from these areas.

Let me now touch on the delimitation of the borders of Lebanon's territorial waters and exclusive economic zone, which are another source of tension. I wish to stress here that my Government has dealt with this sensitive matter with utmost responsibility and in conformity with its rights and obligations under international law.

As members of the Council are aware, more than a year ago Lebanon delimited its southern and south-western maritime borders in accordance with its obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and deposited its charts and coordinates with the Secretary-General, in full compliance with international norms and procedures. One year after Lebanon's deposition, Israel, which is not a party to the Convention, is claiming to assert its alleged right over offshore areas that include a significant portion of Lebanon's exclusive economic zone, thereby once again encroaching upon my country's sovereign rights.

Let me conclude by stressing that Lebanon, as a host country, considers the safety and security of UNIFIL and United Nations personnel to be a priority. That is why the Lebanese authorities not only condemned the attacks on UNIFIL of 27 May and 26 July, but also launched investigations to bring the perpetrators to justice. In the same spirit, the Higher Defence Council stressed, in its statement issued on 12 August, its coordination and cooperation with UNIFIL and the protection of its movements in Lebanon.

The President: There are no furthers speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 3.30 p.m.